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SUBJECT: JEM RETURNS TO WADI HAWAR FOLLOWING CLASHES WITH THE GOS IN
NORTH DARFUR

REF: A) KHARTOUM 890

11. (SBU) Summary: A Government of Sudan (GOS) force comprised of Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Arab militia clashed with Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) forces in the area of Mellit in North Darfur on August 5, according to UN and rebel sources. The clashes resulted in four dead and 19 injured on the GOS side, while JEM casualties are unknown. JEM is since believed to have retreated to the Wadi Hawar area on the Chad-Sudan border. Separately, UNAMID was investigating alleged clashes on August 6 between the SAF and Chadian National Army (ANT) at Jebel Kulbus in West Darfur. End Summary.

TRACKING JEM'S MOVEMENTS THROUGH
NORTH DARFUR

12. (SBU) On July 31, the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) received reports that a convoy of JEM vehicles had been spotted in Habib Germa in the Alliet locality in North Darfur. A UNDSS Officer told Poloff that the convoy contained 16 vehicles. (NOTE: If loaded with the standard 6 men each, this would give JEM a company strength of 96 men. END NOTE.) The convoy was believed to be returning from the Muglad area of Southern Kordofan (formerly Western Kordofan) where JEM is thought to have a sleeper cell.

13. (SBU) On August 1-2, the GOS reportedly targeted the JEM convoy with aerial strikes. Antonov bombers were seen flying over areas north of El Daien, including Abu Sufyan and Um Sauna. Ground fighting between the GOS and JEM reportedly took place in several locations in the Adilla and Alliet localities, though this could not be confirmed by UNDSS. Speaking to Poloff on August 3, rebels from SLA/Abdul Wahid confirmed the presence of JEM in eastern North Darfur, but were unaware of any fighting. They noted they expected JEM to stay clear of their stronghold, the "liberated zone" of Jebel Marra, and instead, return to Chad through the corridor north of El Fasher.

CLASHES IN MELLIT

14. (SBU) Confirmed clashes between the GOS and JEM took place on August 5 in the area of Mellit. A mixed GOS force comprised of SAF and Arab militia confronted the JEM convoy in Abjera (approximately 15 kilometers from Mellit), according to the findings of a UNAMID investigative patrol. UNAMID sources told Poloff the exchange of fire lasted three hours and that JEM is since believed to have retreated with their casualties to the Wadi Hawar area along the Chad-Sudan border. The number of JEM casualties is unknown. On the GOS side, the fighting resulted in 4 dead and 19 injured.

ATTACK IN KORDOFAN UNRELATED?

15. (SBU) Separately, Sudanese media reported that on August 2, the Kordofan Alliance for Development (KAD), supported by JEM, attacked the area of Samuwa on the railway between Babanousa and Al Fula town in Southern Kordofan. SAF successfully repelled the attack, though five of its soldiers were injured and taken to the hospital in Muglad for treatment. No independent verification of the attack could be obtained. (NOTE: Little is known about KAD, but it is said to be composed of representatives from several tribes, including the Hamar, Kababish and Misseriya. Misseriya leadership does not support this group because it has little influence over it, and because the group includes many non-Misseriya. END NOTE.)

RUMORS OF NEW SAF CLASHES WITH ANT IN
WEST DARFUR

16. (SBU) UNAMID sources also told Poloff they were attempting to verify fresh allegations of clashes between the SAF and ANT in West Darfur (Reftel). A UNAMID investigative team met with a SAF commander in Kulbus who reported that on August 6 he received information that armed Chadian soldiers on four vehicles had entered Sudanese territory and were heading towards Aroua village (N 140 18' 10'' E 220 28' 00''), a village which they raided and looted approximately two weeks prior. The SAF commander dispatched his men in two vehicles to stop them. They engaged the Chadian troops at Jebal Kulbus (N 140 30' 00'' E 220 26' 50'') who retreated into

KHARTOUM 00000929 002 OF 002

their territory. No casualty figure was reported. The SAF Commander then contacted his Chadian counterpart by phone to find out why his soldiers had again entered Sudanese territory despite his earlier promise that his troops would no longer do so. The Chadian commander replied that his troops were chasing two of their soldiers who had deserted. UNAMID plans to monitor the situation closely.

17. (SBU) COMMENT: There are several possible motives for JEM's foray into Darfur and Southern Kordofan. While it is possible JEM traveled to Muglad to stir up trouble in the area following the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) decision on Abyei, it is more likely that JEM is exploring alternatives to its base in Um Jaras, Chad should the GOC deny them this safe haven. Southern Kordofan, the desolate Wadi Hawar area on the Sudan-Chad border, and even the Central African Republic are all possibilities for new JEM encampments. The alleged clashes between SAF and ANT in West Darfur, meanwhile, is disquieting. Though Chadian armed opposition forces have pulled back from the border areas, tensions between the SAF and ANT remain high and the potential remains for incidents like this to escalate quickly. END COMMENT.

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